

Aptos fire chief gets a reprieve

APTOS — Full salary and benefits have been extended for embattled Aptos/La Selva Beach Fire District Chief Chuck Streeter.

The Fire Board ordered Streeter last month to submit his resignation after he bought firefighting equipment without board approval. However, when Streeter refused, attorneys for both sides became involved. The Fire Board subsequently gave the chief a 36-day reprieve, extending full salary and benefits through Feb. 28.

Both Streeter's attorney, Phillip Passafiume, and Fire District attorney Richard Bolanos, confirmed Thursday that Streeter's salary and benefits have been extended, pending further discussions.

However, neither Passafiume or

Bolanos would comment on what course discussions have taken, only saying both sides are continuing to talk.

Streeter, chief of the 33-firefighter district for the past 17 months, is fighting for his job over the unauthorized purchase of more than \$84,000 worth of fire equipment.

The equipment, which included two Ford Broncos and 18 units of a breathing apparatus system to prevent smoke inhalation while fighting fires, had been budgeted. But the chief did not get formal board approval or follow normal open-bidding procedures.

Streeter has received an outpouring of support from both the public and other fire chiefs in the county.

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